

S  
E  
C  
O  
N  
D



W  
E  
S  
S  
E  
X

REFERENCE ONLY

This book may not be  
taken out of the Library



---

---

## **The Assistant Masters' Association**

The Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools

**Founded 1891**

**Membership over 20,000**

**Incorporated 1901**

Membership of the Association is open to Assistant Masters teaching in Secondary and Public Schools. The Association is represented on the Burnham Committee, and on every important Educational Body.

**To INTENDING TEACHERS**

who enrol as

**STUDENT MEMBERS**

The Association offers

**CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION  
and ADVICE**

on conditions of service in secondary schools of all types and many other benefits. The JOINT SCHOLASTIC AGENCY, the Appointments Board jointly controlled by the Headmasters and Assistant Masters' Association offers special terms to Student Members of the I.A.A.M. The Association's works on the teaching of Science, Modern Languages, Geography, Mathematics, History, English and Classics are available to members at reduced rates.

For full details write

**SECRETARY, I.A.A.M.**

**29 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.**

---

---

## **THE ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT MISTRESSES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**FOUNDED 1884**

**INCORPORATED 1897**

This Association is one of the Four Secondary Associations recognised by the Ministry of Education and Local Education Authorities and is in membership of European and World Federation of Teachers.

It has representatives on the Burnham Committee, on the Secondary School Examination Council and on the examining bodies which conduct the Examination for the General Certificate of Education.

Professional advice and protection is offered to members.

**MEMBERSHIP** is open to Assistant Mistresses teaching in all types of Secondary Schools.

**STUDENT MEMBERSHIP** is open to intending Secondary Women Teachers.

Members and Student members can use the Joint Agency for Women Teachers at reduced fees.

For full details write to :

**THE ORGANISING SECRETARY, A.A.M.**

**29 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.**

---

---

SOUTHAMPTON'S PREMIER GROCERS

\*

# MISSELBROOK & WESTON LTD.

170 High Street

Tel. : 23656

85 St. Mary Street

Tel. : 22799

18 Bernard Street

Tel. : 23659

\*

Also at . . . . Romsey, West Wellow

Lyndhurst, Highcliffe, New Milton and Burley



have been outfitters to  
The University . . . . .  
and carry full stocks  
of blazers, crests wraps & ties

***BASTICKS***

136 ABOVE BAR . . . . SOUTHAMPTON



## METALS DIVISION

### OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESSIVE CAREERS

**FOR GRADUATES** *in*  
METALLURGY  
ENGINEERING  
PHYSICS  
CHEMISTRY  
MATHEMATICS

*in the field of* **RESEARCH  
DESIGN  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLANT OPERATION  
and MAINTENANCE**

*Please write to  
Staff Manager*

**IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES LTD.**

**METALS DIVISION**

KYNOCH WORKS  
P.O. BOX 216  
WITTON  
BIRMINGHAM 6

# SECOND WESSEX

## THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

MAY, 1959

<i>Editor :</i>	ROLAND ROBERTSON
<i>Assistant Editor :</i>	RONALD KAYE
<i>Business Manager :</i>	A. J. MONTGOMERIE
<i>Assistants :</i>	BRIAN PROSSER
	JENNY SHAW

— \* — \* —

### C O N T E N T S

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial .. .. .	4
Articles: Art and Obscenity .. .. .	6
A Razor Through The Eye .. .. .	12
Commitment in Art .. .. .	20
The Myth of the Beats and the Angries .. .. .	24
Poems: The Seekers .. .. .	11
Spider in the Dust .. .. .	18
The Death of a Lover .. .. .	23
Ultimate Question .. .. .	27
The Last of the Litter .. .. .	30
Miscellaneous: A Mind Untethered .. .. .	9
Immortal .. .. .	17
Echo .. .. .	28
Criticism: Vaughan Williams .. .. .	31

Cover Design: Ian Gallon

## EDITORIAL

THE PRESENT SESSION has seen encouraging signs of an increased willingness on the part of students to participate in and promote cultural activities. We refer especially to the Artist's Society's Exhibition, the Theatre Group's presentation of Dudley Hunt's "Value of a Life", the inception and healthy development of the Jazz Appreciation Society, and the vastly improved standard and response to this magazine. However, we must not deceive ourselves that the present cultural and political situation is as inspiring as it should be. There are, we think, a number of contributing factors which tend to discourage the student here from taking an active interest in anything other than Sun Lounge activities.

Firstly, the fact that mundane Union affairs hold such pre-eminence at the expense of more intellectual pursuits is due, to a large extent, to the age of the leading members of the Union. Whereas these people could do so much to foster the arts and cultural societies they devote themselves to making the Union their own training ground for administrative and social prestige. Thus the fervent idealism that should pervade in a university is lacking. The safety-first attitude of our "elders" runs contrary to the free expression of ideas. Idealism is an integral part of society's development and without experimental idealism society stagnates. Union business and elections are unfortunately the centre of what discussion and initiative that does occur. Whilst the Union is dominated by this "maiden aunt" attitude we see little hope for significant improvement. We realise that administrative problems should occupy a large place in the Union's affairs, but the balance between these and creative functions has been seriously upset.

Another disturbing factor is the attitude of the University staff. The warnings given to students not to join the Theatre Group are well known, but this is only part of a wider tendency to disregard the need for students to be educated and not merely instructed. It is all very well for the Vice-Chancellor to blithely proclaim the desirability of holding an arts festival, but such an event could never take place without a far more positive, co-operative and amicable attitude on the part of the teaching staff. It is regrettable that many lecturers consider lectures are intended solely for instruction, rather than as a means by which thought is promoted and directed. Many of the teaching staff lay emphasis on the class of degree one is likely to get from one's first essay or experiment. This leads to the concept of university education involving only the procuring of degrees.

It is significant that the most frequent inhabitants of the Edward Turner Sims Library are those who rarely take part in non-academic activities. It is horrifying to think that many students consider that they come here just to obtain a degree, whereas this is not, we consider, the most important aspect of university education. The emphasis on swotting is such as to stunt the growth of a liberal education. At the other end of the scale, and equally inhibiting, are those whose main occupations

are drinking, singing dirty songs and rolling around the car park under their cars. The result of these attitudes has been the formation of an inverted snob complex which is embarrassed by anything cultural or political.

Finally, the facilities for society activities are, to say the least, defective. There is at present no suitable place to hold a meeting of any society. Of course, remedies are on the way, but the university authorities do not seem to realise that this is the most crying need of the proposed projects. The "red brick reformatory" in which we move and have our being does nothing to inspire students to anything whatsoever.

This magazine is only one of the mediums through which we can improve the atmosphere of thought in the University. In this edition there are a number of items which by their freshness, dogmatism or idealism lay their authors open to easy criticism, but this, surely, is the best way to collect ideas for the paths which we are to follow in the future. Complacency is the worst of all social and individual afflictions: revolt is in itself not a quality, but revolt against something definite is good, be it a constructive or destructive movement. It is a pity that the number of contributions to "Second Wessex" is still not as great as one would wish. In particular the Arts Faculty students, of all people, seem particularly reluctant to contribute. The deluge of poetry submitted to the Editor does, in some measure, compensate for the scarcity of articles or stories. However, an improvement has been achieved this session in the quantity and quality of contributions, in the general standard of, and in the response to the magazine. Everybody should remember that here is a forum for them to voice their opinions and we sincerely urge anybody who has anything worthwhile to say about any aspect of life to use those mediums which are available in the University, so that by initiative and imagination we make our contribution to the effort to prevent intellectual stagnation in this country.

THE EDITORS.

### ART AND OBSCENITY

ANY ATTEMPT to define the term obscenity is doomed to failure as it holds different connotations for different sections of opinion. A seaside post-card could be described by the "broadminded" as "a bit of fun for the lads in the office" or the height of vulgarity by those who consider themselves to be of strong moral fibre. The latest "Angry" play may be regarded as a work calculated to arouse and gratify base animal lusts or an attempt to throw light on a contemporary social problem. Legal guidance in defining obscenity dates from 1868 in the case of *Rex against Hicklin*. Any matter which tends to corrupt or deprave the innocent can be held to be obscene libel and the publisher can be heavily fined or imprisoned and the work destroyed. This decision gives the court considerable discretionary powers. It must decide who the work is likely to corrupt and whether that person is in need of protection. Mr. Justice Stable has pointed out the unreasonableness of assessing a work of art on its tendency to corrupt impressionable adolescents and by doing this has cast the law in grave doubt.

However true this may be, a case can clearly be made out for the suppression of some writing which makes no pretensions to art but exists—some would have us believe—for the sole purpose of corrupting the impressionable young. This has far wider implications. What is art and how can it be distinguished from non-art and, more important for our present purposes, who is to decide whether a work is artistic? This question can best be answered by examining the effect of the law of obscenity on the various media of art.

Obscenity in the theatre has been in the news quite recently as a result of the Lord Chamberlain's decision to ease restrictions on the general presentation of plays with a homosexual theme, though he reserves the right to censor plays if he considers them dealt with in an unsuitable fashion. A true artist, Henry Moore says, must always be in conflict. He must always present some form of message and some artists feel able to satisfy themselves and their public by writing on a social problem about which they feel strongly. Anyone who writes a play on homosexuality as a genuine attempt to throw light on the problem is an artist and the play is art. Presumably, such a play would be tolerated by the Lord Chamberlain, and his stricture would be confined to plays dealing with the theme in an insincere manner. What does seem wrong is that the Lord Chamberlain no longer exerts judicial powers but must now consider the motives and intent of the playwright. The question now is not "Is this a play about homosexuality?" but "Is this a sincere play about homosexuality?" Surely the Lord Chamberlain must consider whether the play itself actually corrupts rather than whether or not the playwright has dubious motives in writing the play. In view of the fact that an insincere play is perhaps less likely to corrupt than a sincere one, the partial ban on such matter greatly weakens the case for any form of censorship in the theatre.



Graphic art is a field in which censorship seems least to apply, yet it is one which affords considerable opportunity for the "corruption of youth," if by that vague term is meant that it is possible to receive a sexual thrill from looking at a picture. If you accept this definition, no doubt some pictures owe it to art that they can arouse such a response in the beholder. Painting seems to completely escape censorship in this country though it would be difficult to imagine a more offensive picture than, say, "The Martyrdom of St. Agnes." However, it is a most disturbing picture and as such one which is qualified to be called great art.

A more popular aspect of obscenity in graphic art is the sale of "art studies", about which many prosecutions are made every year. It is commonly alleged that these pictures are not offered for sale to true artists but to men with wicked minds. Here again the question of the intent or sincerity of the publishers is the sole criterion of obscenity. Men are found guilty on the grounds that the officiating magistrates find such pictures revolting, but doubtless if it could be shown that the pictures were only available to artists, no charge would be preferred. The argument is that if these art studies of naked women were to fall into the hands of the innocent(?) they *might* corrupt him. Yet they are of legitimate use for an artist.

The great majority of prosecutions for obscene libel result from the publication of novels with a sexual or sadistic theme. Curiously, stories of violent murder are acceptable. Undoubtedly a percentage of these novels qualify as art. They are written with sincerity and in an elegant style. The infamous "Lady Chatterly's Lover" has only recently been made available in an unexpurgated form in this country. It bears the mark of a workmanlike if not a great author and does not seem to be intended to arouse base desires, though it is naïve to imagine that Lawrence did not hope to make the story more readable by "animated" descriptive passages.

"Death of a Hero" by Richard Aldington has never been published in this country in an unabridged form, yet the mutilated version we are permitted to read is quite inspiring. In these circumstances one realises how infuriating it is for novels of great literary value to be suppressed for the purpose of protecting someone who is unlikely to be sufficiently moved to read it, less likely to understand it, and even less likely to be corrupted by it.

A most critical analysis of present methods for assessing obscenity was made by Justice Stable in his now famous summing-up in the trial of the publishers of "The Philanderer" by Henry Kaufmann. The novel describes the decline and fall of a man who is irresistibly attracted to women and is totally unable to control himself even though he realises perfectly well that his conduct will ruin his highly satisfactory marriage. It is a most objectionable book, but very well written, with an understanding of human frailties which makes the action for obscene libel churlish and petty. Stable, one of our most brilliant justices, pointed out the literary merits of the work and warned the jury against finding the pub-

lishers guilty if there was any doubt of its power to corrupt. He reminded them that in examining the power to corrupt it would be singularly unjust to consider the values of an impressionable adolescent alone. One cannot help thinking that Stable was right even though he falsely interprets the Hicklin judgements. The jury found the publishers not guilty on all counts and awarded them costs.

It seems most inconsistent that a work written with intent to illuminate some facet of life by the fictitious representation of the author's ideas and experiences, should receive worse treatment from the law than say, "Rolph's "Women of the Streets" or the Reverend Cooper's "History of Flagellation." Both are purely factual works but are far more likely to corrupt than the worst novel. Rolph's book is virtually a handbook for the prostitute's client. The latter book could easily arouse interest in this form of perversion among the uninitiated. The good faith in which these books were written is not in question, but judged solely on their tendency to corrupt, they would almost certainly be banned. However, they enjoy relative immunity, whilst novels — admittedly written in a different medium — written with man's interests at heart are in constant jeopardy.

Two questions are raised by this brief résumé of obscenity in a few fields of art. The first concerns the intent and sincerity of the artist, and the second the meaning and validity of "the tendency to corrupt." I have talked about "corruption" in a way suggesting that such a process exists. We do not even know what corruption is. We assume, perhaps wrongly, that it has something to do with sex, and we also assume that an innocent person could read books and with their influence become a potential rapist or homosexual. My own view is that only by reading a large quantity of perverted books in a particular way, could a tendency to perversion be detected. But, it has often been pointed out that "Obscenity is in the eye of the beholder." Could someone who read so many books of this type be truthfully described as innocent?

I feel that in considering this issue we cannot neglect the motives of an artist. We must distinguish between writers who wish to give their readers a cheap sexual thrill and those who deal with a real life situation which cannot adequately be described without sexual allusion. We cannot distinguish between the tendency to corrupt exerted by the two types, but we can say which author's work ought to be suppressed if the need to protect the innocent is re-affirmed. Preferably, let us free all forms of expression until it can be conclusively proved that the innocent are depraved and corrupted by them.

## A MIND UNTETHERED

"ANOTHER FAMOUS SCIENTIST REMOVED TO A MENTAL HOME," announced the headlines in one of the "lower" daily newspapers. I scanned the lurid details in this, the latest of a series of similarly mysterious cases. A tiny paragraph in small print at the end of the "story" attracted my attention, for it said something to the effect that this well-known astrophysicist was making investigations into the nature of the Universe.

Then I remembered that I had read somewhere of a theory which stated that the Universe is in fact nothing but a mind. Why I thought of this I cannot tell, but somehow this theory and the mad scientists seemed connected. But, my thoughts continued, this must be the very ultimate in minds; and, thus conjecturing, I leaned back in my easy-chair and stared meditatively at the cracked ceiling. My rational self told me that it was no use thinking about these things, for I am certainly not a scientist. But something was urging me to go on.

I settled myself comfortably in that chair and relaxed my muscles; the table lamp by my bed cast a warm glow through the room; an owl hooted mournfully outside. At first, jumbled thoughts flashed through my mind as various possibilities suggested themselves: the speed of light—186,000 miles per second—can anything travel faster than this?—if so it would have infinite mass: what could have infinite mass?—thought does, in a crude sort of way. Perhaps those clairvoyants have just managed somehow to penetrate this "light barrier" and manipulate their thoughts to a limited sense, in "time."

The way was becoming clearer now; I began to feel that at last I was on the right track. The light shone steadily into the room, the cracks in the ceiling seemed almost to have disappeared, and all was quiet outside. Was it possible to concentrate one's thoughts, in the manner of the clairvoyant, to break right into the heart of the timeless Universe? Had these scientists tried to do this in the wrong way; but was I, a layman, competent to try too? The last question went unanswered as my mind raced on, preparing for its journey into the unknown.

How was my simple isolated mind-fragment to establish contact with *THE* great mind? Through the stars? Every schoolboy knows that their distances from the earth are measured in tens, hundreds, thousands, even millions of light years. The stars we see now are, in fact, not there at all, but some considerable distance farther away in space. Could this time-discrepancy be made use of?

I concentrated, merely as a tentative experiment, on a star I could see twinkling lazily through a convenient chink in the curtains. For what seemed an interminable age, nothing happened. Then suddenly I realised that I was not attached to my body. Rapidly, this and the room disappeared completely, leaving me in an inky black void. But that star

was still there, though shining now with a steady light. It began to move, however, diagonally across my field of "vision" at an increasingly faster rate. Other stars were doing the same, appearing in deeper shades of red: I felt a sudden twinge of pain as I realised that this was the Doppler effect experienced in reverse.

The pain disappeared simultaneously with the infiltration of red light; it was frightening but wonderful in the extreme. Everything shimmered and wavered in extraordinarily ethereal patterns. The light turned blue, and an intensity of sensation in light and sound throbbed about me, as yet but an observer to this amazing "spectacle." I nearly panicked; perhaps this was where the scientists had had to give up, for there were things here beyond explanation. Almost immediately, as if in answer to my query, an eerie voice screamed—"This is impossible!"; and others joined in the chorus of assent.

My mind was undeterred, however; the intense beauty of this experience could not be lost among these gibbering unbelieving minds. I found myself slowly being absorbed into this indescribable "thing"; my thoughts were joining those of the Universe—I was ceasing to exist.

The ephemeral, crystallised, physical Universe was as remote as that distant star I had first fixed upon. Everything was perfectly "relaxed" and "soothing"; none of the normal human senses could feel what I felt then. A slow throbbing kept this perfect mind alive. (These men are just beginning to discover and explain in their expansion and contraction theory the Universe as we know it.) It was a wonderful experience.

However, my mind was gently but firmly isolated from the great mind and returned to its sepulchral body.

Captive once again, my mind reflected in an ecstasy, of a more permanent kind than that experienced by the body, on the magnificence and serenity of all that I had experienced. The light glared, the cracks in the ceiling seemed wider than ever, the owl's hoot more mournful; but I was the richer in the mind than ever before.

B. PROSSER

### THE SEEKERS

WEARY lanterns swing below  
The moon-abandoned reedless lake,  
And many shadows loom aloft  
Like whitish wisps from the cup of time.  
Dark holes are probed with shaking hands,  
And sharpened staves stab down and down,  
Till darkness spurts from gaping caves  
Above the bloodwashed beach below:  
And on the walls around the pit  
Hang rows and rows of priestly grins,  
Wreathed in black decaying flesh.  
They mock the purple eyes above,  
The festered core and fevered limbs;  
Their feet the liquid lilies brush—  
Turn ever, ever from the stone;  
Spurn feeble throbbing frame and grasp  
High-aimed at tearing out the eyes  
That they might see as nothing sees.

**SOUTHAMPTON'S OLD  
ESTABLISHED BOOKSHOP**  
*always welcomes Students who  
can browse at their leisure among  
our large stock of new and  
antiquarian books on three floors*

**H. M. GILBERT & SON**

**2½ PORTLAND STREET**

**(opp. savings bank)**

**Tel. 26420**

**SOUTHAMPTON**

**EST. 1859**

F. E. HAVERON

## A RAZOR THROUGH THE EYE

*Some reflections on avant-garde films of yesterday and today*

---

ARE we past shocking? After the revelations of Belsen and Hiroshima, after Dracula's return and Quatermass' fun, it would seem that horror must have lost its thrill; the deformed monster from Mars is, at best, merely amusing, at worst a crashing bore. We have been for long deluged in spurting blood, supplied by the righteous slayers of Westerns. We have been bludgeoned to a state of insensitivity by Cagney, Bogart, Widmark and Alan Ladd. Charm, that innocent little thing, was raped and flung to the vultures years ago, and good humour was laughingly garrotted. How do avant-garde films look today with their eager adolescent concern to shock the bourgeois? Are we shocked today by the blasphemous attacks on religion in "L'Age d'Or"? Does the slicing of an eye in "Un Chien Andalou" pack its original punch? Is "the call to the slaughterhouse", in Bunnell's phrase, as loud and as clear as it once was? Do we now prefer to be lulled to sleep by the dirge for Tom Dooley? Or is it that the call cannot be heard above the wail of air raid sirens?

In the avant-garde film of today, the voice of the muezzin is silent; no-one calls us to prayer, nor to the fight. Such experimental films as are being made—and these are very few—seem mainly to be purely experiments in abstract art, using the techniques of the animated cartoon. For example "Celery Stalk at Midnight" made by the American John Whitney and shown at the National Film Theatre last year in a programme devoted to the best films from the Brussels Experimental Film Festival, 1958, appeared to consist of animated squirts of green toothpaste against a lilac background. In general, abstract films usually give more pleasure to their makers than to the audience. In this respect the present situation is parallel to that of the first enthusiastic experiments in the 1920s, with their montages of upside-down houses, negative images, accelerated motion, multiple superimpositions and all manner of optical trickery. No doubt on its first appearance, this optical legerdemain succeeded in shocking its audience into a vivid realization of how film could open their eyes to the world around them. But having seen one house standing on its head, what did the audiences get next but more upside-down houses. Few indeed were the films that utilised the newly discovered optical tricks for any dramatic purpose. Clair's "Entracte" and Epstein's "Fall of the House of Usher" were interesting exceptions, the first for its introduction of humour, the second in its achievement in the realm of horror. But both of these films when viewed today seem insipid. "Entracte's" jokes are few and not over-funny. The idea of a camel pulling a hearse is bizarre, but the chase after the runaway hearse becomes rapidly tedious.

The opening rapid montages of chimney pots and inversed houses merely bore. "The Fall of the House of Ussher", however, has a few genuine moments of horror. Here the camera trickery is suited to its purpose, which is the creation of the fantastic atmosphere whereby a woman in a cataleptic trance is taken for dead and buried alive, but even so the eye soon becomes a little weary of such images as six hammers simultaneously knocking six nails into one coffin when repeated ad infinitum.

There is no doubt that the films of the great avant-garde era which have best survived the passage of time are those which forsook the optical trickeries and replaced them with something to say, and not merely to say, but to shout aloud from the roof tops. Vigo's "Apropos de Nice" was a startling documentary contrasting the gay facade of fashionable Nice with its elegant women and limousine-owning aristocrats against the sombre slums in the back streets. Vigo uses shock treatment to make his point, but more often the shock of humorous contrast rather than the shock of breaking taboos. Thus the shoe-shine man goes to clean the shoes of the gentleman, but the feet become bare, a reminder of the poverty stricken families. A funeral procession as in "Entracte" is seen in extra-rapid motion, but the point here is that the sight of funerals discourages the cash customers from coming to healthy Nice. A well dressed young woman seated in a chair on a balcony overlooking the harbour is seen in a series of rapid dissolves, her clothes changing and becoming scantier till the last shot is of her in the nude. Manners maketh Man, perhaps, but clothes make the Woman.

"Un Chien Andalou" and "L'Age d'Or" were films made in collaboration by Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali. They still appear to be capable of surprising, if not shocking, unsuspecting audiences of today. "Un Chien Andalou" owes more to Dali than to Bunuel for it contains more of the surrealist elements which were to make Dali famous: the ants swarming out of a hole in a man's hand is an image which crops up frequently in his pre-War painting. Similarly, the trappings of surrealism are evident in, for example, the mysterious apparel of the lustful cyclist: "Over his head, back and loins, he wears white linen shields. An oblong box with black and white diagonal stripes is strapped to his chest." Or again in the string of miscellaneous objects dragging the cyclist back from his attack on the girl. "First a cork, then a melon, then two teachers from a church school and finally two magnificent grand pianos. The pianos are filled with the carcasses of donkeys, their legs, tails, hind-quarters and excrement sticking out of the piano cases. As one piano passes across the screen, a huge donkey's head is seen resting on its keyboard." ("The Secret Life of Salvador Dali").

Though on paper this sounds shocking enough, in the film the episode is merely obscure and unsatisfying. Unsatisfying but not so obscure is "L'Age d'Or"—almost entirely the work of Bunuel—whose theme is "the bestiality to which love through the tyrannical influence of the Church or society has been reduced." After a short commentary

on the life of scorpions, the film shows a group of bandits who are ejected from their island by a group of bishops, and dignitaries come to lay the foundation stone of Ancient Rome. During the ceremony the officials separate a couple rolling on the ground in a passionate embrace, thinking that the girl is being raped. The man is arrested, but freed when he shows his distinguished civic record. The couple meet again at a garden party and conduct an unsatisfactory attempt at mutual seduction in the grounds of the park while the band plays music from "Tristan and Isolde." The man is called away to the telephone, leaving the girl hungrily sucking a statue's big toe. Suffering from frustration, the man neglects his political mission and causes wars and revolutions. In an epilogue, a group of dissipated old men are leaving the castle of the Marquis de Sade, the chief of whom with his saintly air seems to represent Christ. He goes back into the castle with a young girl and a moment later a scream of terror is heard.

The film of course, makes much use of symbolism derived from Freud and other sources. For example, at one point in the girl's bed lies not the object of the man's lust, but a cow instead. Racked by sexual frustration, the man destroys the bedroom with a large pole and throws out of the window a flaming pine tree, a giraffe and a mitred bishop. Bunnell illustrates society's blinkered outlook, for instance, during a cocktail party when a maid staggers screaming from the blazing kitchen and a large tumbler rolls placidly through the room, but the guests merely ignore it all and continue drinking.

Where is the like of these films today? The cost of making films has risen enormously and benefactors such as the Vicomte de Noailles, who financed Vigo, Bunnell and Cocteau in these early ventures, have disappeared; but also fled apparently is the desire to shock the bourgeois—at least via the medium of film. The deliberate contravention of rigid social taboos on sex, manners and religion is no longer a sport in which young intellectuals wish to indulge. Who indeed can blame them? It is far easier to beat out one's contempt for established society on a typewriter than to go to the trouble of buying expensive equipment and film, as well as acquiring the considerable amount of knowledge of how to use them to their best advantage.

The few experimental films that have been made in recent years possess little of the daring of their predecessors. Lust as a subject for treatment in experimental films has long since lost its thrill. Its place was taken by homosexuality, which figures in many American films which have, thank God, remained in America. However, a young American, Kenneth Anger, has explored black magic in "The Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome", whose story briefly is as follows:—"convocation of enchantresses and theurgists, where magic vies with Magick. The idol is fed. The Elixir of Hecate is served by the shade of Cesare the Somnambulist. Pan's drink is venomous by Lord Shiva. The Ceremonies of Consummation are presided over by the Great Beast Shiva and the



Scarlet Woman, Kali." Alas, the director by his heavy handedness has turned this bizarre theme into a series of stilted charades resembling the Village Amateur Dramatic Society playing coyly at being devils. It is more like a black pudding than a Black Mass. It lacks real drama or surprises, and apart from one bared breast, any exotic flavour. Its ideas are a compound of Indian and Greek mythology with an All-American Boy thrown in for good measure, accompanied by a fugitive from the German Expressionist cinema. Another Anger film "Eaux d'Artifice", alleged to be an evocation of a Ronald Firbank heroine, consists of endless shots of spouting fountains and park scenery through which a crinolined girl walks or, alternatively, runs. Sandy Wilson has done the job better in his musical play "Valmouth."

Of the other Americans whose work has been seen in this country the "Gryphon" group of Stan Brakhage, Willard Maas and Marie Menken has attracted attention for a collection of rather melancholic and pretentious films. For example:—"Image in the Snow"—(The conflicts between love and religion in the mind of a young man. A tangled portrait of helplessness from within is conveyed. A total inability to reconcile Godlike and human affection drives the young man to seek emotional immunity in a graveyard, where he meets his death.) Or "The Way to Shadow Garden" ("In a despairing effort to understand the mystery of divine suffering, a young man robs himself of his sight. The familiar objects remain; he is denied real truth.") Their other renowned shorts "The Mechanics of Love" and "The Geography of Love", have achieved a certain "succès de scandale", the first through its description of the stages of the sexual act by its ingenious use of everyday objects for symbolism, the second by cunningly using unfamiliar big close-ups of familiar parts of the body to suggest occasionally other parts less often presented to public view, coupled with a whimsical commentary about a voyage of discovery in unknown lands. The joke is moderately amusing—if you like that sort of thing—but it will not shake the world as a film.

A school of film-makers which has recently been saluted and acclaimed in this country is the new Polish body of young men who have proved themselves to have original ideas. Here again in their most outstanding experimental films, clarity of expression has given way to obscurity through a concern with technique. "Two Men and a Wardrobe" is a good piece of film making technically, but what are we supposed to make of the film's point? What is the significance of the wardrobe with which the two men walk out of the sea and for which they suffer, being beaten up and socially ostracised? Are we supposed to infer that it symbolises individuality, nonconformity or the spirit of Christian goodness? The film has a questionmark obscuring its heart, with the result that its intellectual and emotional impact is lost on its audience. Similarly "Dorn" is an intricate combination of live action and animated material. Apparently, the title means "home" in Polish and this is the only clue as to what it is all about. At one point in the film a woman's face gazes at a doorway through which a man enters and puts his coat

onto a hat stand and walks out. Again, a close-up of the woman's face, followed by the same man, entering the door, putting his coat on the stand and going. This happens not once, not twice, but about six or eight times without alternation. This may possibly be a symbol of the tedium of married life, but your guess is as good as mine. The film's technical use of animated paper cut-outs and paint is remarkably good but its purpose and message is obscured by its technique running riot.

In England, all is quiet, save for a few cautious peeps at the tawdry delights of Piccadilly Circus ("Nice Time") or teddy boys ("We Are The Lambeth Boys") or an insipid jazz club ("Mamma Don't Allow"). The one really avant-garde experiment during the last few years has been a version of Kafka's short story "Metamorphosis." Made by Lorenza Mazzetti, it tells of the feelings of a man who wakes one morning to find himself changed into an insect. As the director forgot to include Kafka's opening sentence which provides the key to the whole situation, the film becomes obscure to the point of sheer meaningless anarchy.

We have heard reports of new foreign films which have something to say about modern society, making use of newsreel or other actuality material with a contrasting soundtrack. Thus "Mosaik im Vertrauen" has a soundtrack of dull conversation contrasted with explosive shots of warfare and motor accidents. "Life is Beautiful" has shots of concentration camps, exploding H-bombs and hysterical entertainments accompanied by a sound track of pop songs. The reverse method, as in "En Dag i Staden", has boring repetitious visuals, which a commentator describes in detail with loving care, but who passes over without comment dramatic incidents such as a ship sinking on a pleasure cruise. But generally speaking, to-day's avant-garde films lack attack, or passion. What they have to say is, too often, no more than a cloak for morbid introspection or self-pity, plus a valid opportunity for indulging in trick effects. It seems strange that despite the popularity of the Goon Show, no-one has yet transferred their anarchic style of humour, which could be admirably adapted to film, to the visual cocking of snooks at the Establishment. Surely, there is no lack of targets? "There is no straddling the issue. Either you are crazy like the rest of civilised humanity or you are sane and healthy like Bunnel. And if you are sane and healthy, you are an anarchist and you throw bombs." (Henry Miller.) But, so decadent has our society become that Bunnel and all his anti-clerical companions have flourished so well that they in themselves constitute a sort of Establishment. Why should not the soi-disant anarchist receive his own bomb back in his face? "L'Age d'Or" still waits contemptuously for its answer.

CHRISTINE WATKINS

### IMMORTAL

THE road led through the grey gloom of November night. Cold, clean rain pattered with purpose across a desolate valley, desolate because it was lifeless; lifeless because it had no grave.

One light lay amid the shadows, scattering the sadness of forgotten lives across stone steps and old walls. One voice whispered and laughed, was tangled with the wind and flew searching and sighing into the clouds of memory, memory faded with age and blinded with infinite regret.

A weeping broke the stillness of night, mind surrendered to a subjective force that could no longer be controlled. An endless search was finding an end, an unconquerable hopelessness was accepted, a struggle that had destroyed youth, and lingered with immeasurable pain into age, had now faced death with despair.

Optimism and idealism had weakened. Life, intangible, elusive, unattainable, hovered and longed, and vanished for ever. Achievement hung like a lonely myth in the black sky, and faded with the waning moon. Sorrow, all-absorbing, merciless, inescapable, made positive the loneliness.

The night, the lost, and the broken soul found rest. One light was eclipsed.

Happiness became immortal.

SPIDER IN THE DUST

I WALK down dark streets  
Interminably long, disappearing in the dust  
And the haze of a myriad of distant lights.  
Dust rises, lights dance and eyes water;  
And the road grows no shorter,  
Alley-ways stretching into nothing,  
Save the squall of a cat  
And the rattle of a dustbin lid bowled by the wind,  
Perform transcendental contortions  
And the road is the same,  
The same dust and the same unattainable lights  
Dancing in the dust.

"Come into my parlour" said the spider  
And in I crawl, into the web,  
Into the web of light and gay disorder,  
Dancing to imagined music,  
Laughing with imagined mirth.  
Round me all the threads are falling;  
Eagerly I snatch and drape them around me,  
Bind me to the light and gay disorder  
And I dance and laugh with the milling throng  
As they prance across the floor;  
And all the time a voice within  
Struggling against the imagined din  
Of synthetic music and laughter,  
And the laughter and music are hushed,  
The threads crystallised and the glass smashed  
And the room is suddenly empty,  
Full of empty people.

I return to the street,  
Longer, darker than before,  
The lights more distant and the dust more thick,  
With spirit battered and illusions shattered.  
Blue-black buildings leaping to the starless sky  
Threaten to crush me to the dust,  
The blinding dust that rises with each step  
And dims the lights that ever call me,  
The ever distant unattainable lights  
That dance before me  
In the watery dust of my eyes.

"Come into my parlour" said the spider  
And in I crawl, into the web,  
Into the web of dark and attentive silence,  
Watching imagined images,  
Thinking imagined thoughts.  
Round me all the threads are falling;  
Eagerly I snatch and drape them round me  
Bind me to the dark attentive silence  
As I watch and think with the silent group  
As they match their brains against synthetic polymaths;  
And all the time a voice within  
Nagging with sharpness of a pin  
And the room is suddenly empty,  
Full of empty people.

The dust is thicker now  
And my spirit is low.  
Along my street a million unseen people hurry,  
Beneath my feet a million spiders scurry;  
I lift my foot and crush one  
Grinding spider and dust to paste.  
This one action, obliteration of the one temptation,  
Removal of self-reproval,  
Gives me the strength to raise my head  
And brings the blood back to the brain.  
The dark pavements down which I have been walking  
Are moving, with a muttering and stuttering,  
Grinding and gnashing as cogs intermesh,  
And the pavements are moving the way I have come,  
And my walking has taken me nowhere.

So now I am running,  
Running down the dark and dusty road  
And the dust dissolves.  
And I can see the people around me,  
The unseen beings of a tortured dream;  
And the haze dissolves  
And I can see the lights before me  
Unblurred by misty consciousness  
And the lights merge into one,  
Into the sun, and the sun is rising.

## COMMITMENT IN ART

IN recent years there has been much discussion of the problem of commitment in art. Much of this has taken place in intellectual left wing circles, but although direct political commitment is an important aspect of the problem, the discussion of commitment involves more far reaching aspects of life than that pertaining merely to the political spectrum. The whole question of artistic integrity depends to a large extent on the degree of willingness of the artist to commit himself: not necessarily to party political ideas alone, but to sincerely formulated principles and values. Harold Nicholson has recently said that if a poet is insincere, citing Pope as an example, he rejects that poet as an artist of worth. I think that commitment and sincerity are very closely connected, and it is my contention that art of worth will only emanate from committed artists. Much art which is non-committal appears to have been written in a vacuum and thus only purports to be art, because of its isolation from life. Many artists who are too dependent on their publics have achieved cheap publicity; but it is those who are committed to certain ideas and principles and are rejected or persecuted in their own day who are often later regarded as great artists. The Impressionist school of painting and D. H. Lawrence are two examples of this. A more peculiar example is that of Boris Pasternak, who because of international political conflicts has become the victim of both deflated and inflated criticism, because of his own commitment. This essay is an attempt to determine the importance of art (especially of literature) and the forces behind its creation in the light of the merits of commitment, showing how commitment is a valuable asset to the artist, both socially and aesthetically.

From the great intellectual activity of the nineteenth century there arose a change in the conception of culture. Culture came to be linked to the idea that art of any age is of necessity closely related to the mode of living and the economic and political conditions. This leads consequently to aesthetic, moral and social opinions being interrelated. This idea which is now generally accepted can be interpreted in different ways and at different extremes; Marx being an extremist. During the nineteenth century the boundary between art and politics was notably obscure. One may refer to Carlyle, Kingsley, Arnold, Mill, Ruskin and Morris in this respect, whilst Mrs. Gaskell and Disraeli wrote from a position of awareness of social problems. It is from these writers, notably the first group (by no means homogeneous), that the idea of art being directly related to life and yet connected to a higher plane was forcibly expressed. These people wrote at a time when social problems could hardly be ignored, but many realised that they had social responsibilities in any case. Ruskin said that "the art of any country is the exponent of its social and political virtues." Morris laid emphasis on the ability of the artist to help the people enjoy life more fully. The complexities of the Industrial Revolution and its aftermath have, in fact, bound cultural ideas very much more closely to "life."

Art expresses feelings and communicates these feelings. As men live by feelings, the importance of art is undeniable: but art also creates ideas upon which men act. The Russian Revolution sprang from the art of Marx: his art owes its power to its simplicity and as Joyce Carey said, "Marx made millions believe in the simple way to the millenium by the simplification of his ideas and the rhetoric of his art." Such important writers as Rousseau, Diderot and Voltaire influenced the French Revolution, whilst in our own century the wave of Fascism in the 1920's and 1930's was linked to artistic movements. The Soviet Union, recognising the influence of art, has tried to control it by the enforcement of Leninist-Zhadonovist aesthetics. This regrettably has led to barrenness in modern Russian painting, writing and composing. But the part that art can and does play in politics is irrefutable. To lift art from politics is to lift art from life. Attempts have been made to do this, but they have been notable for their drabness and superficiality. The so-called art of the late Victorian period, prompted possibly by the ideas of Pater, was art for art's sake, and exhibits both these defects.

One of the main reasons for the retreat to non-commitment has been the decline in artistic creation in the Communist countries, where Marxist cultural principles have been interpreted in a perversely materialist manner which denies the expressionistic functions of art. Experimental expression regrettably appears dangerous to the ordinary member of the Communist Party. The key to this dilemma lies surely in the possession of a feeling of social responsibility, rather than in conforming to set political rules. If one acknowledges the vitality of art one cannot deny that every writer, painter and composer has a moral duty to perform his tasks with this feeling uppermost in his mind. This does not mean that a single exposure of bad living conditions in the Dickens' manner is sufficient. The writer should consciously carry his principles into every work. If he disapproves of capital punishment and a hanging appears in one of his novels he should depict it in an unfavourable light. This is the basis of artistic integrity and it is a test which exposes those artists who place too much emphasis on technical efficiency and/or indulge in art for art's sake; the latter being a principle destined to stifle the powers of the imagination. The type of work resulting from this approach is essentially superficial, standing outside the events of its day and merely creating a pictorial morality. Because the interpretations and the presentation of a work of art indicate a writer's stand, we do not see the true self of the artist if he ignores life. Certainly the work of Gauguin, D. H. Lawrence and Vaughan Williams was not conceived in purely aesthetic terms, nor in order to achieve purely aesthetic ends. Art is intuition on which men act after contemplation of the actual, and to talk of a writer working unhampered by political allegiance (in a broad sense) is nonsensical for a number of reasons. Firstly, no man can entirely submerge his opinions when creating a work of art. Secondly, it is inadequate for a writer to write a novel, for instance, trying consciously to submerge his own ideas when this is in fact impossible. Therefore it is better for him to formulate his ideas about life and use his art to express them. Both Ruskin and

Tolstoy firmly believed that all art is bad unless it has a moral purpose. This is so not only for moral reasons but because a work resulting from an effort not consciously moral lacks strength of expression and is therefore defective. As it is the advent of Communism that has accelerated discussion of commitment, it is not surprising that the most interesting theories on the subject come from Socialists. In contrast to the rigid Leninist conception of the rôle of literature, Engels said "there is no compulsion for the writer to put into the reader's hands the future historical resolution of the social conflict which he is debating." Engels even went so far as to think that the opinions of the author should remain hidden. By his preference of Balzac to Zola on these grounds Engels appeared to refer to specific political opinions. The Leninist ideas have held sway in Russia and only a few men have diverged from Stalinist orthodoxy, Luckács being a notable example of this group.

I think that the most rewarding path lies between the ideas of Lenin and Engels. Sartre has achieved a position outside strict adherence to Party discipline, yet he is an obviously committed writer. Adherence to a code which is external to one's emotions and considered opinions obviously leads to distortion of expression and, of course, insincerity. Thus the artist, whilst owing allegiance to formulated principles concerning the social good, should be free to express them in his chosen form, not necessarily, say, in a dialectical examination. The means of expression can, in fact vary from "Das Kapital" to "Gulliver's Travels." In this way full reign can be given to æsthetic, moral and political aspects of all forms of art, although a compromise has to be achieved between these three aspects. I think the revolt against commitment, although inevitable, is an unfortunate sign of artistic stagnation. Industrialisation initially brought commitment with it, but now it is an integral part of our life, the materialism it has given us is leading to complacency, an attitude we can ill afford. Art is certainly not the narrating of events as they happen. Everybody, no less the artist, should have their own views on the great social problems of the day. Thus by looking objectively at each situation and interpreting it in the light of his opinions, the artist can produce works of initiative, integrity and interest.



THE DEATH OF A LOVER

THE fog felt her all over,  
    Fingered her face.  
She replied with a shiver;  
Pleaded to the place  
Which she could not see.

A cat walked silently;  
Met a dog and climbed a lamp-post.  
The lamp-post struck one  
And down he ran,  
Into the mist.  
Hickery dickery.  
Misty mockery  
Kissed the crockery  
On the tables behind the curtains,  
And fought with the two-piece coal fires.

The mist collided two trains,  
And fled along the telephone wire  
To feel her face in the doorway.  
The dog chased the cat away  
And returned . . . to sniff the curb.  
She opened her lips without a word,  
And the mist escaped from her mouth.  
The sun is shining in the south.

"Why do you stand there in the doorway?  
Why do you stand there in the mist?  
Why do you let yourself be lonely?  
Why don't you let yourself be kissed?"  
Whispered the fog,  
While the dog scratched.

"The door is unlatched.  
The train has crashed;  
The line is splashed  
With your lover's blood.  
He will never meet you again at night;  
The place is empty where he stood."

The sun in the south mocks the lamp-post's light.

"I am dead.  
I am dead,  
Because I knew.  
He is dead.  
He is dead,  
And I am dead too."

BRIAN THOMAS

### THE MYTH OF THE BEATS AND THE ANGRIES

"YOUNG MAN, there ain't nothing in the world these days."

So sings Mose Allison; and these sentiments are repeated by the new, young, and very non-Ivy League American intelligentsia. And from England there comes an angry cry of confusion and discontent voiced by our young playwrights and novelists. On both sides of the Atlantic during the past few years the two movements represented by the Beats and Angries have been gathering momentum. They can no longer be ignored as being simply a passing fashion or phase. Their very existence raises several very important and often embarrassing questions.

There is a fundamental difference between the two movements, even though they are similar in so many respects and complementary in what they are trying to achieve. The Beats are angel-headed hipsters in search of an angry fix: in other words they appear to be delinquent. On the other hand our own mixed-up generation is looking for a more rational way out. But we can be accused of being apathetic, whilst the hipsters are occupied in burning themselves out. Although we are traditionally conservative, and our trans-Atlantic cousins sensualists, we cannot ignore the fact that they have probably done more in the direction of solving their problems than we have in this country. Perhaps we are too restrained, or should I say repressed, by our intellectual reserve, and the Beats have resorted to, and here I employ that well-worn quotation of St. Thomas Aquinas, "The authority of the senses." But they are bound to succeed where we may fail, because they draw strength from the fact that they have gone to extremes; they have made sure that they are so far out on the limb that it would be impossible to compromise and to turn back. In this way they have placed themselves beyond criticism. The value of the best attitude lies in its negative absolutism.

Basically the Beats and the Angries have two things in common, their youth and their rebellion. In comparing the similarities between the two attitudes these factors are very important and go a long way towards explaining the phenomena, youth because of the freshness and the passion that it assigns to the causes, rebellion because both groups are trying to change the world in which they live. The position of the rebel in both countries is rather precarious: the rebel is always accredited with more than his fair share of naiveté. If this is true of the United States and England it is perhaps not valid in, for example, France, where the rebel is, if anything, respected. If one examines contemporary French literature this point is well illustrated. Consider such names as Cocteau, Sartre and Camus. It can be claimed that most of these writers have a sound philosophical background, which the critical continental intellectual is more aware of. Here is another reason why the Beats and the Angries stand apart from similar movements in other countries. The English speaking peoples' definition of the "intellectual" is perhaps too vague. He is usually thought of as being the mildly intelligent and sensitive dilettante with a smattering of knowledge covering a range of

well-talked-of subjects, thus he is "au fait" with such topics as music, art, politics, religion, literature, and psycho-analysis (the last field will prove invaluable to his social and sexual aspirations). But the age of the dilettante is dead, and in continental Europe today he is regarded as being a useless bore. In continental Europe the critical standards are much higher; the intellectual must have something to offer in the way of legitimate and serious thinking, instead of playing at cultural "one-up-manship." In illustrating this point I would submit the classic example of Colin Wilson who a few years ago "shook" the English literary scene with his analysis of the "Outsider"; it proved to be a rather feeble and plagiarized attempt at popularizing the essentially continental philosophy of Existentialism. The result was to intensify dilettantism in this country, and to replace our own well established intellectuals with the usurpers who came to be known as the Angry School. Their reputation has now grown out of all proportion to their actual talent. If they had been left alone to develop instead of suddenly finding themselves in the middle of the spotlight then something worthwhile might have resulted from this movement. There can be nothing more ruining for a young writer than overestimated success; except starving to death. But I shall not deny that the English theatre has, as an indirect result, been helped along the road to revival, partly due to the material offered to it by a group of young playwrights led by John Osborne. But even here the drama is for the most part based upon the struggle of the dilettante against his middle class background. The revolt of the Angry is not based upon philosophical or humanistic concepts but is purely a rebellion against the middle class stamp, the Monarchy, and the values of bourgeois English society. But because it is not as intellectual as the continental, or extreme as the American revolts it is doomed to accept a compromise. It cannot expect to achieve anything apart from intensifying the sickness that afflicts our generation.

In America the Beatniks' struggle has a similar sociological basis. Their revolt is against the "Organization Man" and the "Affluent Society." They are intent on tearing down the image of the American way of life. Motivation can, in part, be found in the fact that their country is a matriarchy. The American male has for a long time been bent by the wishes of the American female. It is not surprising that they now want to knock both mother and George Washington. The new way of life the Beats have adopted is bohemian. The way they attack is to retreat. They appear to find harmony in Eastern philosophy; although I imagine few of them understand the true significance of what is involved in Zen. But their retreat into themselves does indicate that they are seriously indulging in introversion. They appear to have torn down the barriers of the mind. Everything has been thrown overboard in order that they should know themselves. Inhibition is a sin. They talk of God; perhaps for them he is their soul: there is much to be said for interpreting God in this Eastern sense. For them God is not, as he was for Nietzsche, dead.

Although we may agree with them in principle it is difficult to justify

their behaviour. But I sympathize with their "burning themselves out", purification through sin, and their doing away with the restrictive camp that we are forced to conform to, and thus becoming men responsible not to society but to themselves alone. Responsibility is a corollary of authority. Perhaps in this way they will realize the Nietzschean concept of a moral superman, with authority being the very essence of their superiority.

We can dismiss the writings of Kerouac and Ginsberg as being little more than glimpses into the Beat world. "On the Road" is a wildly enthusiastic piece of prose, but it fails as a novel. "Howl" shows warmth and feeling for Ginsberg's fellow Beatniks, but as poetry it is a rather poor attempt to revive the style that was much more ably used by Walt Whitman. But even if these two writers have received much publicity in this country, two other far superior novelists have not; namely, Norman Mailer and Truman Capote.

One of the obsessions of the Beat movement, and similarly the Existentialists, is death. More talent has been killed in car crashes in America than there is left alive today. This talent has now been immortalized. The most obvious example of this is James Dean. But there were other and more notable figures than he. Nathaniel West was a brilliant novelist of the younger school. Jackson Pollock has now been accepted for his genius in Action painting. Clifford Brown, a very prominent trumpeter in the cool idiom is worthy of mention. There has been a loss from every branch of American culture. The Beat Generation is riddled with irony, and is even more intense than its precursor the Lost Generation. It has taken much from Hemingway and Henry Miller and has gone one stage further in its revolt.

The Beats may be accused of being conformists in their non-conformism, but at the same time they are, above all, sincere. "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, hysterical naked...."

LEONARD OSCRAFT

ULTIMATE QUESTION

the crest on the eagle's head  
opposes the curve of its beak  
just as the crest of the wave  
seems to arrest  
its forward movement  
    o poetic vision! why  
do you arrest and oppose the poem  
while you sort yourself out? why  
does rust arrest and oppose further rusting? why  
does grief or joy  
expand the heart  
but within well defined limits?  
the sweetmeat spoils the appetite  
    stomachtight  
bellysweating  
    distended to extend no more  
from roof to floor  
    from door to door  
where am I going in my own  
tight and draughty little world?  
    god knows  
if he exists  
    that is  
    and then perhaps  
        he doesn't know.

ECHO

HE SAT DOWN and wrote so vigorously that the little bottle of red pills on the table in front of him wobbled and rattled. It was uninspired writing, but he felt that if he kept writing and writing and writing, inspiration might come to him. On the other hand it might not, he thought. He could quite easily continue writing without inspiration, writing all the leaden thoughts that occurred to him. But at least it would have been worth doing in one respect, even if it were not worth reading. It would have occupied his time, that time after midnight when loneliness is all the more stark in its nakedness, when every sound is magnified, when the mind is clear and when things assume a beauty and significance which they do not possess in the day. His thoughts were beginning to flow. Loneliness. Loneliness struck him as the key word . . .

. . . loneliness is the basis of this outburst. It is loneliness that makes me write. I have been with friends today, and still felt desperately alone. I have no god to keep me company. I do not want a god because he would give me a conscience, and at the cost of loneliness I do not want a conscience. I do not want to know what I should do in any situation in which I might find myself. Morality does not interest me. Nor should it. What good is morality when I am alone. A man alone in a boat out to sea does not need morals; there are no other men to hurt by his being immoral. Masturbation would not be immoral. Let that man in a boat out to sea masturbate until he gets palsy in his arms if he wants to. He will not interfere with anyone else. He will not waste himself, for he is wasted by being there, out to sea, in a boat, alone. At least he may give himself pleasure by masturbating.

Loneliness is always painful. It is this pain that distinguishes it from solitude. Solitude brings with it the complete absence of obligation towards others because there are no others to oblige. Solitude can be bliss. But loneliness is a loaded word, a word loaded with pain, often intense pain. Perhaps solitude can be the most satisfying form of existence, especially when it is solitude shared. Solitude shared is when one is alone with another with whom one is "at one." To be "at one" with someone is bliss, even when one is not in solitude with that person; but when solitude enfolds the two parts of the same being, then solitude is at its most sublime.

I am thinking of solitude with pain, for I am lonely. I long for the company of another with whom I can merge and thus unify our existences. It doesn't matter who that person is, whether man or woman. I am beginning to display myself as a complete romantic. Rationalism has no answer to my problem; It cannot dissolve my pain. I cannot "think out" my problem. I cannot analyse myself so that my pain disappears. These methods may

work, but it is unlikely, and I have no desire to try them. I have no desire to tick like a clock or rev. like an engine, or do whatever other machines might do. Tiredness is slowing my thought. Rationalism cannot conquer tiredness. In the same way it cannot conquer the pain of loneliness. Tiredness is an adequate reason for me to put down my pen. The delicious ache of yawning jaw muscles . . . the delicious smarting of clenched eyelids . . . delicious tiredness that leads to sleep . . . sleep, in which I can submerge my loneliness . . .

. . . he submerged his loneliness in the solitude of his dreams, or lack of them.

\* \* \* \*

His key clicked in the lock and the door swung open into the cavern of his cold and dark room. He took off his coat and hung it on the back of the door, switched on the light, and strode over to the window and drew the curtains. He sat down at the table . . .

. . . this is the second chapter of my outburst . . . bursts of spontaneous thought come at the most inopportune times. Often I find that they come when I am cycling. I suppose it is because riding a bicycle is so habitual that one can think quite deeply about anything. But if I think of something when I am cycling, I cannot easily make a note of it, and so I don't bother, and consequently when I arrive at my destination I have forgotten all about it, the brilliant flash has gone, gone for a lifetime; or at least I think it has gone for a lifetime, for it may turn out that I will think the same thought later without my realizing that I have thought that thought before.

This second chapter of the outburst is not due to loneliness as was the first chapter. Rather it is due to penitence—at least in part—and partly due to relief, relief from the loneliness and bitterness of yesterday. I cannot understand the brutality of my own sensitivity. But this feeling of bewilderment occurs after, and not during, my spasms of depression. Bewilderment can be the cause of depression, or anguish, or distress, or whatever I might like to call these spasms.

He paused, pen in hand, for a moment. Then he put his pen down and went over to the gramophone, selected a record and put it on . . .

. . . I am listening to a Woody Herman record—"Moon Burns." I have often felt the moon burn. Each ray of white light has a razor edge which cuts, or sears, through my mind into something deeper inside me.

Mind, soul, character, heart—what, I ask myself, are the differences between these? Mind, perhaps, is the best, the broadest term for the non-substantial part of me. It includes the mental processes, the effects of environment—Oh! But does it

include urges, emotions, passions? God knows! I am bogging myself down with the fruitless task of word-defining. I know what I mean by "mind", "heart", "soul", "character", and "body." That is the most important point. And I can use them in such a way that they will mean to other people with whom I wish to communicate more or less what I want them to think I mean.

Existence is a curate's egg. Even the putrifying carcass in the gutter can have teeth like pearls. My difficulty with women is that I am too much a brother to them. I have too much sympathy and understanding. This sympathy and understanding in some unaccountable way forbids me to be a lover. Hence I do not consider my ability to command a woman's confidence to be in any way an asset; and thus I do not boast about it. It is deeply satisfying to be considered a worthy enough person to be confided in, and in some ways it is more pleasing than physical relationships. I know what I'm talking about. I have had both kinds of relationships. But the women with whom I have had a physical relationship I have never considered them as anything more than playthings. With the woman whom I take to be a person, I can never break through the barrier of my own fraternalism. With a woman whom I can take to be a person, I want . . . I want . . . caress of lips, caress of fingers, caressing weight of arm around my neck, caressing pressure of soft body against mine . . .

. . . he put down his pen and went out into the black and moon-white streets where he walked through the night with solitude.

MICHAEL DAWES

#### THE LAST OF THE LITTER

THESE were the cats I adored in my childhood,  
Tight-trousered and pony-tailed, bulbous or slim,  
Mary and Caroline, Mavis and Marlene,  
Pursued by Alfonzo, Luigi and Jim.

Watch them gyrating in evening's hot ecstasy,  
Hep to the hair oil and perfectly timed,  
Each pan a little more dead than the next as he  
Applies all the power of a notable mind.

Far down my memory voices are chattering,  
Cooled by a Cola, if horribly sore,  
Squares wearing ties fill my college refectory,  
Cradle of intellect rock me no more.



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

ONE HAS TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS when criticising a writer's "personal approach" to a subject, since one can only question his. However, anyone unacquainted with Vaughan Williams' music, who read Mr. Kaye's article would, I am sure, be led to one or two false assumptions, and I would like to give an alternative viewpoint.

First, the writer states that he is unattracted by Vaughan Williams' "folksy" music. If so, I am surprised that he can be fully reconciled to any of the composer's music at all, for the folk-song element is inherent in almost everything he wrote. I agree that the Fourth and Sixth symphonies are greater achievements than his earlier works in lighter vein, but this is no indication of the merit of, say, the "Tallis Fantasia" or the "Norfolk Rhapsody." Schubert's first six symphonies have neither the emotional intensity nor technical refinement of the "Unfinished" or "Great C Major" symphonies, but they are pure Schubert and should not be regarded as immature. Likewise, I find Vaughan Williams' early works interesting because they give us a glimpse of the composer's character. Mr. Kaye also seems to have odd ideas about symphonies generally and Vaughan Williams' in particular. In what way are the early symphonies lacking in unity? I can only assume that the writer has little knowledge of the "Sea Symphony" or, in particular, the "London." And what promotes the curious statement that "*a symphony, unlike any other musical form, should be an interpreted whole?*" Of course it should, but what about the concerto, the quartet or the sonata, in each of their various forms?

Finally, though I share Mr. Kaye's enthusiasm for Vaughan Williams' works, I think it is rather rash to assume his supremacy over Elgar. He has, admittedly, done more for English music than Elgar, particularly in the editing of the English Hymnal and in the encouragement of amateur music-making, but comparisons should not be made so soon after the composer's death. At a later date we will be able to evaluate his merits in true perspective.

---

NEW EDITOR

The Editor gratefully acknowledges receipt of the following:

"Student Mirror", "Student News", "The Student", "The Gong" (University of Nottingham), "The Student" (University of Edinburgh), "Youth Life", "Tomorrow's Teacher."

The Editor expresses his thanks for the great assistance given to "Second Wessex" this session by the printers, G. F. Wilson & Co. Ltd.

It is hoped that there will be students willing to take on the responsibility of producing this magazine next session. A magazine is necessary to all universities and the task is a rewarding and interesting one.

THE EDITOR.

Telephone 56363 (5 lines)

Established 1860

## **S. B. Lowman & Sons**

---

LIMITED

*Bakers and Pastrycooks*

Caterers for all occasions

Wedding Receptions

Luncheons, Dinners

Teas, etc.

*Enquiries to :—*

*Head Office :*

**76/86, PORTSWOOD ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON**

## **WISEMAN'S**

**Fine Art Dealers and Booksellers**

A Large Stock of Pictures, Framed and Unframed

A Very Wide Range of Artists' Materials

Greeting Cards - Frames - Drawing Instruments

Books Not In Stock Gladly Ordered

**13 PORTSWOOD BROADWAY, SOUTHAMPTON**

**Telephone 57705**

---

---

# **NATIONAL UNION of TEACHERS**

---

The professional  
organisation of teachers in  
England and Wales

**TOMORROW'S TEACHERS**  
can be  
**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**  
**NOW**

**Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, W.C.1**

